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SYNTACTIC CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF TURKISH AND ENGLISH

I. INTRODUCTION

The „Contrastive Analysis“ (CA) of linguistic aspects is based on structural linguistics. In the 1950s and 1960s, behaviorism and structuralism were of great popularity and the CA was formulated by C. C. Fries (1945) and developed by R. Lado (1957). It was regarded as the comparison of the structures of two languages or more and finding out the points of differences which are the main source of difficulty for language learner and which form the basis for the preparation of language texts.

The ultimate aim of contrastive linguistics is to compare phonological systems, morphological systems, syntactic and lexical meanings of two or more languages. The Contrastive Analysis was the result of the need to teach a Second Language (L2) in the most efficient way, as R. Lado makes clear in R. Ellis (1985, p. 23): „The teacher who has made a comparison of the foreign language with the native language of the students will know better what the real problems are and can provide for teaching them. The origins of contrastive analysis, therefore, were pedagogic“.

The interest in contrastive linguistics originated in the US during the Second World War when an urgent need arose for English language teaching in an economical way. After the Second World War, foreign language learning gained importance and CA became the landmark of preparing instructional materials and of teaching foreign languages.

C. C. Fries (1945, p. 9) assures that „The most effective materials (for foreign language teaching) are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner.“

It must be noted that the CA hypothesis exists in strong and weak versions which are equally related to the notion of mother language (L1) interference. The strong version claims that all the errors in L2 can be predicted by identifying the differences between the learner's native language and the language being learned, but the weak one of the hypothesis claims to have the power to diagnose errors in

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L2. R. Wardhaugh (1970, p. 123) states that according to the strong version, all L2 errors that will occur can be predicted through the differences between L1 and L2 and the weak version claims that only some of the errors can be identified through these differences.

H. D. Brown (2000, p. 208) claimes that „the principal barrier to the second language system is the interference of the first language system with the second language system, and that a scientific, structural analysis of the two languages in question would yield a taxonomy of a linguistic contrast between them in which in turn would enable the linguist to predict the difficulties a leaner would encounter".

R. Stockwell *et al*. (1965) assure that the main source for predicting the difficulties is the interference between native language and target language. They introduced a hierarchy of difficulty where the teacher or the linguist can predict of the difficulty of a given aspect of the target language.

C. James (1980) states that CA involves two steps:

1. Description, that is, a formal description is made.
2. Comparison which is concerned with the identification of areas of differences and similarities, including „prediction" signaling which areas may cause errors and difficulties.

This paper basically attempts to compare Turkish and English with the aim of describing the similarities and differences between them in the area of syntax.

II. TURKISH AND ENGLISH ALPHABETS

The Ottoman Turkish language is known today as Turkish. Modern Turkish is spoken by about 70 million people in The Republic of Turkey and about 200 000 people in Northern Cyprus. Turkish belongs to the Ural-Altaic family of languages. It is written from left to right. The Turkish alphabet is sorted as follows: **a, b, c, ç, d, e, f, g, ğ, h, ı, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, ö, p, r, s, ş, t, u, ü, v, y, z**. The Turkish alphabet contains 29 letters. Punctuation is the same as those characters used in English. The Turkish alphabet contains 29 uppercase and 29 lowercase letters.

The English alphabet is sorted as follows; **a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z**. The English alphabet contains 26 letters. It also contains 26 uppercase and 26 lowercase letters. Although these two languages use the Latin alphabet, they have different letters. The letters (**ç, ğ, ı, ö, ş, ü**) in Turkish do not correspond to any letter in English, and the letters (**q, w, x**) are not normally used in Turkish.

III. SOUND INVENTORIES OF TURKISH AND ENGLISH

English and Turkish have 20 consonants in common. Almost every consonant that exists in Turkish also exists in English. English has a total number of 24 consonants; whereas Turkish has 21. Tables 1 and 2 display the phonetic nature of consonants in both languages.

Table 1

English consonant phonemes (adapted from Roach 2000)

Manner of articulation	Place of articulation							
	Bila bial	**Labio-dental**	**Den tal**	**Alveolar**	**Palato-alveolar (Post-alveo-lar)**	**Palatal**	**Velar**	**Glottal**
Plosive	**p b**			**t d**			**k** g	
Frica-tive		**f v**	**θ ð**	**s z**	**ʃ ʒ**			**h**
Affri-cate					**tʃ** d**ʒ**			
Nasal	**m**			**n**			ŋ	
Lateral				**l**				
Appro-ximant	**w**				**r**	**j**		

Turkish consonants differ from those of English in terms of their place of articulation, as table 2 displays

Table 2

Turkish consonant phonemes (adapted from Göksel, Kerslake 2006, p. 3-6; see Appendix 1)

	Place of articulation						
	Bilabial	**Labio-dental**	**Dental**	**Palato-alveolar**	**Alveo-palatal**	**Palatal**	**Glottal**
Stops VI	**p**		**t**			**k**	
Vd	**b**		**d**			g	
Fricatives VI		**f**		**s**	ʃ	ɣ	**h**
Vd		**v**		**z**	**ʒ**		
Affricates VI				tʃ			
Vd				**dʒ**			
Nasals	**m**			**n**			
Laterals				**r**	**1**		
Approximants					**j**		

English has 12 vowel phonemes with three degrees of tongue height such as high, mid and low as illustrated in Table 3:

Table 3

English vowels (adapted from Roach 2000)

	Front	**Central**	**back**
High	i:		u:
	ɪ		ʊ
Mid	e		ɔ:
		ə	ɑ:
		ɜ:	
low	æ	ʌ	ɒ

Turkish, on the other hand, has 8 vowels with two positions of tongue height; high and low as it is shown in table 4.

Table 4

Turkish vowel phonemes (adapted from Göksel, Kerslake 2006, p. 9;see Appendix 1)

	High		**Non-high(mid and low)**	
	Rounded	**Unrounded**	**Rounded**	**Unrounded**
Front	ü	i	ö	e
Back	u	ı	o	a

IV. VOWEL HARMONY IN TURKISH

Vowel harmony is a phonological process which determine what vowel will appear in all but the first syllable of a word.If the vowels in the root are formed in the back of the mouth ɑ/ æ /, undotted i /ə/, o /ɔ:/, u /ʊ/ as in *araba* /æræbæ/ (car), we add *-lar* (plural suffix) to make *araba**lar*** (cars). If the vowels are made in the front of the mouth (e /e/, i /ɪ/, ö /əʊ/, ü /y/), we add *-ler* to *ev* /ev/ (house) to make *ev**ler*** (houses). Likewise *banka**lar*** /bænkælær/ (banks) but *otobüs**ler*** /ɔ:tɔ:bysler/ (buses). Turkish language is an agglutinative language, which means that it attaches its grammatical information to the end of a root-word according to the vowel harmony rule.

A suffix is sometimes preceded by a buffer letter such as „y” for smooth pronunciation. It is used between two vowels as follows:

Gitmeyiz /gıtmejız/

Go + negative suffix (-me) + buffer sound (-y) + personal suffix stands for (we) (-iz) (We do not go.)

As a result of vowel harmony, only the following sequences are permissible in native Turkish words:

‘a’ can only be followed by ‘**a**’ or ‘**ı’**

Back Vowels ‘ı’ can only be followed by ‘**a**’ or ‘**ı’**
‘o’ can only be followed by ‘**a**’ or ‘**u’**
‘u’ can only be followed by ‘**a**’ or ‘**u’**

Front Vowels: ‘e’ can only be followed by ‘**e**’ or ‘**i**’

‘**i**’ can only be followed by ‘**e**’ or ‘**i**’
‘**ö**’ can only be followed by ‘**e**’ or ‘**ü**’
‘**ü**’ can only be followed by ‘**e**’ or ‘**ü**’

(Göksel and Kerslake 2006, p. 21)

V. SYNTACTIC CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS

In this section, the basic sentence patterns in English and Turkish will be clarified to illustrate the similarities and differences between them. The syntax of

Turkish is very different from that of English. The Turkish language is characterized as a head final language where the modifier/specifier always precede the modified/specified. This characteristic affects the word order of the sentence which can be described as SOV where the verb is positioned at the end but the word order of English sentences can be described as SVO.

Examples:

1. Progressive Tense (Şimdiki Zaman)

Present continuous tense (Şimdiki zaman kipi) describes what is happening now at this moment. It is also used for what will happen in the near future as follows:

a. Köpek suyu içiyor. /kəʊpek sʊjʊ ıtʃıjɔ:r/
(the) dog + water + drink + progressive marker (-ing) (-yor)
(The dog is drinking water.)

b. Otele Bülent gidiyor./ ɔ:tele bylent gıdıjɔ:r/
(the) hotel + to (-e) + Bülent + go + progressive marker (-ing) (-yor)
(Bülent is going to the hotel).

2. Past Tense (geçmiş zaman)

Unlike English, there are two types of past tense in Turkish. Turkish definite past tense (Ğörülen Geçmiş zaman) is eyewitness tense and it states that something definitely happened in the past. The definite past tense morpheme -dı applies to verbs and it has eight allomorphs (-dı, -di, -du, -dü, -tı, -ti, -tu, -tü). They are based on the vowel harmony rule stated above. The suffix vowel and the stem vowel have to share the same specification for both backness and rounding. Also, the suffix consonant and the stem consonant have to share the same voicing as the following examples show:

a. Henrike üniversitye gitti. /henrıke ynıversıtje gıtı/
Henrike + *university* + to (-e) + go + definite past suffix (-ti)
(Henrike went to university)

b. Günder mektup yazdı. /gynder mektʊp jæzdə/
Günder + (a) letter + write + definite past suffix (-dı)
(Günder wrote a letter).

Unlike the first type, indefinite past tense (Ŏğrenilen Geçmiş zaman) is used for hearsay and reporting. It is used when the event has not been eyewitnessed personally and for tales and jokes. Turkish also adds the indefinite past tense morpheme –mış which has four allomorphs (–muş, –mış, – miş, –müş) to the verbs based on the vowel harmony rule as in the following examples:

a. Ahmet dün okula gelmiş. /æhmet dyn ɔ:kʊlæ gelmıʃ/
Ahmet + yesterday + school + to (-a) + come + indefinite past suffix (-miş)
(It is said that Ahmed came to school yesterday).

b. Ŏğrenci bakkala git miş. /əʊrendʒı bækælæ gıtmıʃ/
(the) student + (the) shop + to (-a)+ go + indefinite past suffix (-miş)
(It is said that the student went to the shop).

3. Future Tense (Gelecek zaman)

The future tense suffix (based on vowel harmony) is either –acak, or –ecek. After a verb root ending in a vowel, a buffer letter –y is used to become (–yecek). If the suffix follows by a vowel, it will be transferred to (–eceğ or – acağ) as in example c.

a. Murat Ankaradan gelecek./mʊræt ænkærædæn geledʒek/
Murat + Ankara + from (-dan) come + future suffix (-ecek) (will)
(Murad will come from Ankara).

b. Ahmet yarın sabah trenle Ankaraya gelecek./æhmet jærən sæbæh trenle ænkæræjæ geledʒek/
Ahmet + tomorrow + morning + train + with (-le) + Ankara + buffer sound (-y) + to (-a) + come + future suffix (-ecek) will
(Ahmed will come to Ankara with the train tomorrow morning).

c. Ben alacağım / ben ælædʒæɣəm/
I + take + future suffix (-acak) + personal suffix (-ım) (I)
(I will take)

4. Present Tense (Geniş zaman)

The simple present morpheme (–ır) applies to verbs, and it has the following allomorphs: (-ar, -er, -ır, -ir, -ur, -ür, -r). They are based on the vowel harmony rule as the following examples demonstrate:

a. Ben çayı içerim. /ben tʃæjə ıtʃerım/
I + tea + drink + personal suffix (I)
(I drink tea).

b. Ben okula giderim./ben ɔ: kulæ gıderım/
I + school + to (-a) + go + present suffix (-er) + personal suffix (I)
(I go to school)

Turkish examples stated above show that the word immediately before the verb is usually the most important word in the sentence and conveys the main point. The subject is often left out if it is a personal pronoun, since it can be derived from the verb conjugation as the following examples illustrate

a. Bu kitabı okuyorum./bu kıtæbə ɔ:kujɔ:rum/
this + book + read + progressive suffix (-yor) + personal suffix (I) (-um)
(I am reading this book).

b. Bu evi alıyorum./bu evı æləjɔ:rum/
this + house + buy+ progressive suffix (-yor) + personal suffix (I) (-um)
(I buy this house).

As in most null subject languages, the subject in Turkish, as stated above, can be left unexpressed in finite clauses (Kornfilt 1988). The choice of a lexical subject in pro-drop languages relies greatly on pragmatic coordination, such as emphasis and contrast (Davidson 1996). The appearance of overt pronominal and lexical subjects is grammatically optional (Özsoy 1987). When the intended referent can be recovered from the discourse, the speaker may use a pronoun or leave out the noun phrase (NP) completely as in the following examples:

1. okula gidiyorum. /ɔ:kʊlæ gıdıjɔ:rʊm/
school + to (-a) + go + progressive suffix (- ing) (-yor) + personal suffix (I) (-um)
(I am going to school).

or

2. Ben okula gidiyorum /ben ɔ:kʊlæ gıdıjɔ:rʊm/
I + school + to (-a) + go + progressive suffix (- ing) (-yor) + personal suffix (I) (-um)

It should be noted that the above examples are equivalent with respect to their truth conditions. The existence of the pronominal subject in example 2 doesn't affect the truth value of the sentence. It should also be noted that when the referent of the pronoun is contrasted with the referent of another NP, an overt pronominal subject is required as shown in the following example:
Evi Deniz temizlemedi. Ben temizledim /evı denız temızlemedı.ben temızledım/

house + Deniz + clean + neg. suffix (-me) + past suffix (-di) + I + clean + past suffix (-di) + personal suffix (I) (-im)
(Deniz didn’t clean the house. I cleaned (it).)

It would not be possible to show contrast without pronouns, as the only indicator of person is the suffix (-m) on the verb while overt subject realization in English is a syntactic requirement, rather than a pragmatic one.

Personal suffixes in Turkish are attached to nouns, adjectives and verbs as follows:

a. nouns

Example

Ben Ŏğretmenim /ben əʊretmenım/ ((- im) attached to noun)
I + teacher + personal suffix stands for Be (-im) (I am a teacher)

b. adjectives:

Example:

Ben Hastayım/ben hæstæjəm/ ((- ım) attached to adjective)
I + sick + (y) buffer sound between two vowels + personal suffix stands for BE (-im)
(I am sick)

a. **verbs**:

Example:

Siz unutunuz /sɪz ʊnʊtʊnʊz/
You (plural) forget + past suffix (-tu) + personal suffix stands for (you) (-nʊz) (you forgot.)

VI. VERBAL SENTENCE PATTERNS

To elaborate, the basic sentence patterns realized in both Turkish and English will be described and compared:

PATTERN 1:

English: NP Vi (intransitive verb)
Example: Birds fly.
An intransitive verb is self-sufficient. It can stand alone with its subject. It can be modified by words and word groups, known as adverbs and adverbials.
Example: The child runs fastly.

Turkish: NP1 Vi (NP1)
(note: NP1 stated between brackets is optional)
Example: kuşlar uçar /Kʊʃlær ʊtʃær/
bird + pl. suffix(-lar) + fly + pres. suffix(-ar)
(The birds fly.)

The pattern form NP – Vi exists in English whereas the pattern (NPı) Vi – NP1 may occur in Turkish when the subject NP is a pronoun except for third person singular.

Example: (Ben) erken kalkerim /(ben) erken kælkerım/
NPı adv. Vi NPı (-im)
(I) + early + wake up + present suffix (-er) + personal suffix (I) (-im)
(I wake up early)

but: (*O*) *erken kalker*/ ɔ: erken kælker/
NP1 adv. Vi + present suffix(-er)

(he / she) + early + wake up + ∅(no personal suffix stands for he/she)
(He / she wakes up early)

PATTERN 2:

English: NP1 Vt (transitive verb) NP2
The girl likes the dog

Turkish: (NP1) NP2 Vt (NP1)
Kɪz kŏpeği sever /kız kəʊpeɣı sever/

NP1 NP2 Vt
(the) girl + (the) dog + like + present marker (-er)
(The girl likes the dog).

Both languages are similar because the transitive verb in English and Turkish takes a direct object NP. They are different in terms of Vt and NP. (direct object). Vt precedes the NP (D.O.) in English as in the following example:

The girl bought a dress
NP1 Vt NP2 (DO)

whereas Vt follows NP (DO) in Turkish, and the Vt may take the personal suffix reflecting the subject NP1 as the following examples show

Khalid Istanbuldan geler /kælıd əstænbʊldæn geler/
NP1 NP2 Vt + present suffix (-er)
Khalid + Istanbul + from (-dan) + come + present suffix (-er)
(Khalid comes from Istanbul.)

Ben çayı severim /ben tʃæjə severım/
I + tea + like + personal suffix (I) (-im)
(I like tea)

PATTERN 3:

English: NP1 Vt NP2 NP3
The teacher lent the student a book.
NP1 Vt NP2 (I.O) NP3 (D.O)

The NP1, NP2 and NP3 have different referents. Such pattern has two grammatical objects. These two objects are called direct and indirect objects. The indirect object may often be replaced by a prepositional phrase beginning with „to" or „for" or occasionally with a different preposition as follows:
He sold a ticket to the student.
This pattern sentence may be transformed into the passive by making either the direct or the indirect object the subject of the passive in English as in the following example:

I gave her a book.
a. A book was given to her.

or

b. She was given a book by me.

Turkish: NP1 NP2 NP3 Vt (NP1)
Ŏğretmen Ŏğrenciye bir kitap ŏdŭnç_/əʊretmen əʊrendʒıje bır kıtæp əʊdyntʃ/
NP1 NP2 (I.O.) NP3 (D. O.) Vt

(The) teacher + (the) student + buffer sound (y) + to (-e) + a (-bir) + book + lent + no suffix stands for 3rd person singular

(The teacher lent the book to the student.)

This pattern in English and Turkish has direct and indirect object with the same type of transitive verb. NP1, NP2 and NP3 have different referents in both languages. The objects (N2 + N3) precede the Vt and the verb may take the personal suffix as stated in the above Turkish examples. In contrast, the corresponding pattern in English the Vt precedes the two objects. Although the pattern NP1 Vt NP2 NP3 in English may be transformed into the passive by making either the indirect object (NP2) or the direct object (NP3) the subject of the passive, there is only one passive form of corresponding pattern (NP1 NP2 Vt) in Turkish.

Example:

Mal tüccara teslim edildi /mæl tydʒæræ teslım edıldı/

NP1 NP2 Vt + passive suffix(-il) + past suffix(-di)

Goods + traders + to (-a) + give + passive suffix (-il) + past suffix (-di)

The goods are given to the traders

Mektup Aliya yazilmiş /mektʊp ælıjæ jæzılmıʃ/

NP1 NP2 Vt +passive suffix(-il) + past suffix(-miş)

(a) letter + Ali + buffer sound (-y) + to (-a) + write + passive suffix (-il) + past suffix (miş)

A letter is written to Ali.

PATTERN 4:

English: NP1 Vt NP2 NP2

The basketball team chose Murad captain.

Turkish: (NP1) NP2 NP2 Vt (NP1)

Basketbol takımı Muradı başkan seçti /bæsketbɔ:l tækəmə mʊrædə bæʃkæn setʃtı /

NP1 NP2 NP2 Vt + (past suffix) (-ti)

(the) basketball + team + Murad + captain + choose + past suffix (-ti)

(The basketball team chose Murad captain).

The verb used in English and Turkish is transitive. The first NP2 in both languages is the direct object and the second NP2 is the objective complement. The Vt follows NP1- NP2 in Turkish; in contrast, it precedes NP1 – NP2 in English as follows:

Muradı başkan seçtim /mʊrædə bæʃkæn setʃtım /

NP2 (object) NP2 Vt + past suffix (-ti)+ personal suffix (I)(-m) (NP1)

I chose Murad captain.

Pattern 5:

English: NP1 Vt NP2 Adj
People thought Janet pretty
NP1 Vt NP2 Adj

Turkish: (NP1) NP2 Adj Vt (NP1)
Herkes Janeti güzel zannetti /herkes dʒænetı gyzel zænetı/
NP1 NP2 Adj Vt + past suffix(-ti)
People + Janet + pretty + think + past suffix (-ti)
(People thought Janet pretty)

The pattern in English and Turkish employs the same type of transitive verb. The verb in English precedes the direct object with the adjective complement; in contrast, in Turkish the same type of verb follows the NP with its Adj. the subject NP is obligatory in English whereas it is optional in Turkish as in the following example; however, it is obligatory occupied at the end of the predicate:

Janeti güzel zannettim /dʒænetı gyzel zænetım/ (subject NP is not used)
NP1 (object) + Adj.+ Vt. + past suffix (-ti) + personal suffix stands for (I)
(I thought Janet pretty).

PATTERN 6:

English: NP1 VL (linking verb) NP1
Ahmed became a teacher
NP1 VL NP1

Turkish: (NP1) NP1 VL (NP1)
Ahmet Öğretmen oldu /æhmet əʊretmen ɔ:ldʊ /
NP1 NP1 VL + past suffix(-du)
Ahmed + teacher + become + past suffix (-du)
(Ahmed became a teacher)

In Turkish, the linking verbs cannot easily be recognized structurally. These verbs can be labeled according to their function in the sentences. The pattern in English and Turkish employs the same type of linking verbs. The second NP serves as a subjective complement (S.C).The first NP1 is optional in Turkish. It is obligatory in English. The linking verb precedes the second NP1 in English; in contrast, it follows the second NP1 in Turkish as in the following example:

Öğretmen oldum /əʊretmen ɔ:ldʊm/ (subject NP is not used).
NP1 (S.C) + VL+past suffix (-du) + personal suffix I (-m) (I became a teacher).
We can also say:
Ben öğretmen oldum /ben əʊretmen ɔ:ldʊm/ (subject is used)
SNP NP (S.C) VL+ past suffix (-du) + personal suffix I (-um)
(I became a teacher.)

VII. GENERAL PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Turkish is classified as a head final language. This characteristic affects the word order of the sentence which can be described as an SOV where the verb is positioned at the end. Turkish learners will face difficulties while learning the English sentence patterns because their native language is an SOV but English is an SVO. Turkish is an agglutinative language.Its modals and auxiliaries are used as suffixes and they cannot be separated from the predicates(verbs/nouns/adjectives) which have final position but English modals and auxiliaries are used as separate words as the modal (-malı) in Turkish which is equivalent to (should) in English:

Onunla konuşmalısın /ɔ:nʊnlæ kɔ:nʊʃmæləsən/
him + to (-a) + talk + modal (should) (-malı)+ personal suffix (you)
(you *should* talk to him).

and the progressive suffix (-yor) in Turkish which is equivalent to (Be+ing) as in the following example:

Ben Ammana outuruyorum /ben æmænæ ɔ:tʊrʊjɔ:rʊm/
I + Amman + in (-a) + live + progressive suffix (-yor) + personal suffix (I) (-um)
(I am living in Amman)

Accordingly, Turkish learners may produce „I living in Amman" in place of „I am living in Amman". The clear distinction between the two languages will facilitate learning English languages for Turkish learners.

Teachers of English who teach Turkish learners should place greater emphasis on the differences between English sentence patterns and Turkish sentence patterns in order to eradicate the problems which may appear in learning English sentences. The Turkish learners may produce sentences such as „The girl the dog like" because they may follow the same pattern in Turkish:

(NP1) NP2 Vt (NP1)
KIz kŏpeği sever /kız kəʊpeɣı sever/
NP1 NP2 Vt
(the) girl + (the) dog + like + present marker (-er)
(The girl likes the dog).

3rd Person singular(-s) is not used in Turkish language. The simple present morpheme (–ır) applies to verbs regardless the singularity of the subject, and it has the following allomorphs: (-ar, -er, -ır, -ir, -ur, -ür, -r). They are based on the vowel harmony rule as in the following example:

Ahmet çayı içer /æhmet tʃæjə ɪtʃer/
Ahmet + tea + drink + present suffix (er)
(Ahmed *drinks* tea)

Accordingly, Turkish learners may produce the following wrongly:

Ahmed *drink* tea.
They may also produce the following:
„We are *teacher*„ in place of „we are *teachers*"

In English when the subject of the sentence is plural, the NP2 will be plural; when it is singular, the NP2 is singular; however, in Turkish whether the subject is plural or not the NP2 is normally singular as follows:

Biz Ŏğretmeniz /bız əʊretmenız/
We + teacher + personal suffix stands for (Be)
NP1 (pl.) Np2 (sing.)
(we are teacher) in place of (we are teachers)

All in all, using different methods based on the distinction between two languages and creating solutions to the problems that students face while learning a language different from their mother tongue may shape the classroom learning efficiently and affect the students' positivity.

CONCLUSION

This paper attempts to compare Turkish and English in terms of describing the similarities and differences between them in terms of syntax. Basic sentence patterns in English and Turkish are clarified and studied.

To conclude, the paper finds the following:

1. The word order of the Turkish sentences can be described as SOV where the verb is positioned at the end but the word order of English sentences can be described as SVO.

2. Unlike English, Turkish shows that the word immediately before the verb is usually the most important word and it conveys the main point.

3. Transitive verbs in English and Turkish take direct and indirect objects, but they are different in terms of Vt and NP. Vt precedes the NP in English whereas Vt follows NP in Turkish. The Vt may take personal suffix reflecting the subject (NP)in Turkish.

4. In Turkish, the linking verbs cannot easily be recognized structurally. These verbs can be labeled according to their functions in the sentences.

4. When the subject of the English sentence is plural, the NP will be plural; when it is singular, the NP is singular; however, in Turkish whether the subject is plural or not the NP is normally singular.

We can say such results of contrastive analysis are transferred to language teaching materials, syllabuses and test construction. As a result of contrastive analysis, it is possible to eradicate the errors caused by the differences between L1 and L2.

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Appendix 1

The Turkish alphabet and writing conventions (adapted from Göksel and Kerslake 2006, p. XXII)

The list below provides a rough guide to the pronunciation of the 22 consonants and 8 Vowels in Turkish.

Letter Pronunciation: A, a pronounced as *u* in 'c*u*p'; B, b *b* as in '*b*it; C, c *j* as in '*j*am'; Ç, ç *ch* as in '*c*hip'; D, d *d* as in '*d*eep'; E, e *e* as in 't*e*n'; F, f *f* as in '*f*it' or 'full'; G, g g as in 'get' or 'gull'; ğ either lengthens the sound of the vowel preceding it or is silent between two vowels; H, h *h* as in '*h*ope'; pronounced also in word medial and final positions and sometimes silent between two vowels; I, ı pronounced as *a* in '*a*mong', '*a*lone'; İ, i a shorter form of *ee* as in 'b*ee*t' or *i* as in 'b*i*t'; J, j *s* as in 'lei*s*ure'; K, k *k* as in '*k*ept', '*c*ure' and '*c*alf'; L, l *l* as in '*l*amp', 'bu*ll*' or '*l*urid'; M, m *m* as in '*m*ilk'; N, n *n* as in '*n*o'; O, o *o* as in 'off'; Ö, ö resembles the sound which is produced when *e* as in 'b*e*t' is pronounced with the lips rounded, as in the German sound 'ö'; P, p *p* as in '*p*in'; R, r produced with the tip of the tongue touching the alveolar; S, s *s* as in 'hi*ss*'; Ş, ş *sh* as in '*sh*eep'; T, t *t* as in '*t*ime'; U, u *u* as in 'c*u*te' or p*u*t'; Ü, ü resembles the sound which is produced when *i* as in 'b*i*t' is pronounced with the lips rounded, as in the German sound 'ü; V, v *v* as in '*v*ery'; Y, y *y* as in '*y*ou'; Z, *z z* as in '*z*ig*z*a.

Abstract

This study explores the differences and similarities between Turkish and English in the area of syntax. The discussion leads to the conclusion that the word order of the Turkish sentence can be described as SOV where the verb is positioned at the end whereas the word order of the English sentence can be described as SVO.

Example: Sabahta çayı içtim /sæbæhtæ tʃæjə ıtʃtım/ morning + in (-ta) + tea + drink + past suffix (-ti) + personal suffix (I) (-m) (I drank tea in the morning).

In Turkish, the nominal sentence (non-verbal sentence) consists of the subject which takes the initial position and the predicate which follows. A Personal suffix is attached to the predicate as the following examples show:

Ben ŏğretmenim /ben əʊretmenım/

I + teacher + personal suffix standing for Be (- im) (I am a teacher.)

Sen ŏğretmensin /sen əʊretmensın/

You + teacher + personal suffix standing for Be (-sin) (you are a teacher)

Unlike English, the subject of Turkish could be cancelled if it is stated in the previous sentence and the personal suffix is attached to the verb instead, as the following example testifies:

Akşamta Ankaraya gittim /ækʃæmtæ ænkæræjæ gıtım/

evening + in (-ta) + Ankara + buffer sound between two vowels (-y) + to (-a) + go + past suffix(-ti) + personal suffix (I) (-m) (I went to Ankara in the evening).

Such conclusions are helpful in language teaching materials, syllabuses and test construction.

Keywords: *Turkish, English, Syntax, nominal sentence, non-verbal sentence*.

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